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Nik Aziz-Mahathir

NOT PROPER TO DISPUTE DR MAHATHIR'S SINCERITY

KOTA BAHARU, June 23 (Bernama) -- Kelantan Menteri Besar Datuk Nik Abdul Aziz Nik Mat said it is not proper for anyone to dispute Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad's sincerity in resigning from all posts in Umno and Barisan Nasional (BN).

He said Dr Mahathir's move could enable the younger group to fill up all the posts.

"Whether it's sincere or otherwise, it's all in the heart," he told reporters here today.

Earlier, PAS national information chief Azizan Abdul Razak claimed that the announcement by the Prime Minister of his resignation was a political drama.

Azizan claimed that Dr Mahathir purposely did that to enable him to regain the support of Umno leaders and members, besides the rakyat, after making a change concerning the privileges of the Malays.

The Prime Minister made a statement which shocked the nation at the end of the Umno General Assembly in Kuala Lumpur yesterday, when he announced his decision to step down as Umno president and BN chairman but retracted it after appeals by members of the Umno Supreme Council.

Nik Aziz, who is also head of PAS Ulama Council, hoped the Prime Minister could withstand the stresses and work pressure when he agreed to reassume all the posts.

He felt that Dr Mahathir should remain as Prime Minister to lead the nation.

Nik Aziz, however, hoped Dr Mahathir could make some changes in his approach and in Umno so that the party could be friends with PAS and not issue negative statements about PAS.

"It's better for us to be friends, Datuk Seri's (Dr Mahathir) own burden can be reduced if (Umno) and PAS were to become friends. I myself can accept the friendship.

"If (he) still holds the positions but his thinking remains the same, there will be more problems. It has become the talk among the opposition parties, after stepping down (from positions), retract (the resignation)," he said.

Nik Aziz said there was no point in PAS and Umno continuing to "fight" if both parties could accept Islam wholly especially when Dr Mahathir himself had announced that Malaysia was an Islamic country.

"But if we are still quarrelling among ourselves, without any logical reason, then we are deliberately looking for trouble," he said.

Dr Mahathir left for Europe this morning for a week's vacation.

-- BERNAMA

RAR AO